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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000438

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; PACOM FOR FPA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: BURMA: [INDONESIAN](#) AMBASSADOR PREVIEWS ALATAS VISIT

REF: A. JAKARTA 599

[B](#). BANGKOK 2217

[C](#). RANGOON 1215

Classified By: COM Carmen Martinez for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#). (C) Summary: Indonesian Ambassador to Burma, Wyoso Prodjowarsito, revealed on March 31 that Presidential Advisor Ali Alatas may revisit Burma o/a April 17, although that date could slip due to the concurrent Burmese New Year. Prodjowarsito portrayed Indonesia as a close friend of Burma and suggested that Alatas would offer the regime "help and advice." Alatas, as during his most recent visit in 2003, will not make a meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi "a top priority." Prodjowarsito's preview gives us the impression that Alatas does not intend to depart from his soft approach toward the Burmese regime. End Summary.

[2](#). (C) On March 31 COM and P/E Chief called on Indonesian Ambassador to Burma, Wyoso Prodjowarsito, and learned that Indonesia had yet to receive an invitation to the second Bangkok meeting on Burma, scheduled for April 30 (ref B). However, Prodjowarsito had recently met with the Burmese Deputy FM and expected an invitation imminently. Prodjowarsito offered his own view that the first Bangkok meeting, held last December, was helpful in that the GOB had agreed to attend and sent FM Win Aung as its envoy. However, Prodjowarsito said, the GOB had provided no new information at the first session and expectations would be higher for something concrete at the upcoming meeting.

[3](#). (C) Prodjowarsito said that Indonesian Presidential Advisor Ali Alatas was scheduled to arrive in Burma o/a April 17, but noted that this date fell on Burmese New Year and could slip due to the related water festival, which effectively shuts the GOB down April 12-17. According to Prodjowarsito, "Indonesia is a close friend of Myanmar; Alatas will visit at the invitation of the GOB and he will offer the Burmese whatever help and advice we can." Prodjowarsito said that when Alatas made his most recent visit to Burma in September 2003 (ref C) he had met with SPDC Chairman Than Shwe and Prime Minister Khin Nyunt, meetings he would likely pursue again. "However," the Ambassador added, "it has never been Alatas' top priority to see Aung San Suu Kyi and he will not pursue that opportunity unless she asks for it."

[4](#). (C) Prodjowarsito told the COM that the U.S. should not pressure the SPDC. "You have to be patient," he said, "and you need to lift sanctions in order to give the GOB some room to breath." COM replied that the regime was responsible for its own predicament and stated that there are numerous steps (e.g. the release of ASSK and the rest of the NLD leadership; the release of 1,300 political prisoners; etc.) that the SPDC could take to improve its standing with the international community. The COM referred to a statement the GOB had issued on March 28, critical of recent U.S. Congressional testimony on Burma, that complained no country can transform itself into a democracy "overnight." The COM observed that the military had seized power in 1962 and said, "Forty two years hardly qualifies as "overnight."

[5](#). (C) Comment: The Indonesian Ambassador in Rangoon is not a major player and he seemed somewhat uninformed about recent Burma developments. He does, however, get more deeply involved when Alatas is in town. According to Ambassador Prodjowarsito, Alatas operates independently from UN Special Envoy Razali as well as from the Bangkok process. Although separate reporting (ref A and previous) indicates that Alatas does in fact coordinate with others on Burma, we did not get the impression from this meeting that the Indonesian Presidential Advisor intends to depart from the "soft" approach he took during his previous visit. End Comment. Martinez